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Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/78. It contains observations by the high-level Steering Group on disarmament and development regarding the 2004 report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development, and summarizes the activities recently undertaken by the partner departments and partner agency of the Steering Group in areas related to disarmament and development.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/78, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development". In that resolution, the General Assembly welcomed the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/59/119), and requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development,[1] and to report to the Assembly at its sixtieth session.

II. Action taken

High-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development

2. The high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development welcomed the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The report, which represents the first review of the subject matter following the adoption of the Final Document by the International Conference on the relationship between disarmament and development in September 1987, has helped to reinvigorate and update discussions on this key issue.

3. The Steering Group took note of the references in the report of the Expert Group to various issues related to disarmament and development, in particular the following: (1) the pivotal role that security plays in defining the relationship between disarmament and development; (2) the need for increased development assistance to help the social and economic progress of developing countries; (3) the importance of addressing the multifarious threats to development posed by illicit small arms and light weapons; (4) the crucial role of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction process; (5) the importance of preventing conflict in order to avoid the debilitating financial, economic and social costs associated with civil conflicts and with armed conflicts between States; (6) the recognition that terrorism presents a major threat to development in view of the insecurity it creates and the damage that acts of terrorism can do to the economy of afflicted countries, particularly by discouraging investments and disrupting specific sectors of the economy; (7) the importance of exercising restraint in military expenditures in order to facilitate the availability of more resources for development; and (8) the valuable role that civil society groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can play in partnership with Governments in both disarmament and development.

4. The Steering Group also took note of the numerous recommendations contained in the report of the expert group (A/59/119), particularly those that are addressed to the Steering Group, as well as those that are addressed to the United Nations system in general. In that regard, the Steering Group appreciates the observation by the expert group regarding the importance of political will on the part of Member States and the availability of adequate resources in order to enable the United Nations to play a central role in the disarmament-development relationship.

5. The Steering Group acknowledges the importance of the recommendation contained in the report that the United Nations and other international organizations should make greater efforts to integrate their disarmament, humanitarian and development activities. The Steering Group has designated focal points at the working level and is in the process of examining how the issues related to disarmament and development can be better integrated into the activities of appropriate components of the United Nations system. It is also considering modalities for raising greater awareness of the subject matter through its outreach activities.

6. Many activities that fall under the rubric of disarmament and development continue to be carried out by various components of the United Nations system as part of their respective policies and programmes, as highlighted in the present section of the report. In numerous cases, those activities are taking place in the context of addressing the multiplicity of threats to the stability and development of many societies posed by illicit small arms and light weapons. In some cases, the disarmament-development relationship is being promoted through efforts to assist interested Member States in achieving improved governance on a range of defence-related issues. In respect of military expenditures, which remain a significant issue in the disarmament-development relationship, the Secretariat continues to be engaged in intensive efforts to promote transparency in armaments as an essential first step towards encouraging restraint in defence spending and discouraging the excessive accumulation of armaments.

7. It should be noted that the implementation of many activities to promote disarmament and development depends on the availability of resources. The financial constraints of the Organization continue to represent significant limitations in that regard. Thus, as in previous years, a major factor would be access to extrabudgetary support.

Activities undertaken by the partner departments and partner agency of the Steering Group

8. The previous report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/57/167) summarized certain activities related to disarmament and development undertaken by the partner departments and agency of the Steering Group. Activities conducted over the past two years that have a bearing on the subject are described below.

9. The Department for Disarmament Affairs organized a symposium on disarmament and development on 9 March 2004 at United Nations Headquarters with a view to facilitating the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development. Independent experts[2] were invited to make presentations on various aspects of the disarmament-development relationship in response to a request for such briefings by the Group of Governmental Experts.[3]

10. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations led a United Nations inter-agency process with 13 other United Nations departments, agencies, programmes and funds[4] for the joint development of a set of policies, guidelines and procedures, known as integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards. The standards aim to provide clear and accessible guidance to disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration practitioners in the field to better inform the planning and implementation of those programmes. The standards foster a comprehensive and holistic approach in order to better integrate the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration dimensions in the programmes, with special attention to the specific needs of women, children and the receiving communities of former combatants. As such, the standards strengthen a linkage between disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and long-term development processes. In addition, the Department established an integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration unit with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in peacekeeping missions in Haiti and the Sudan, which brought the disarmament and development aspects of the programmes together in a more holistic fashion. Discussions are under way to identify an appropriate structural and institutional framework for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations in peacekeeping missions to further foster inter-agency collaboration with the other United Nations agencies, programmes and funds. Furthermore, the Department, together with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, commissioned a study on integrated missions that examines the broader structural and institutional integration of peacekeeping with the humanitarian and development partners. At the same time, the Department is engaged in building a closer relationship with international development partners, including the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, on such issues as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and security sector reform.

11. The United Nations Regional Centre for Disarmament, Peace and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, in cooperation with UNDP, organized a disarmament and development workshop in Lima from 27 to 29 September 2004 as part of an international effort to raise awareness of the link between disarmament and development initiatives. The workshop took into account the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/59/119). Participants attending the workshop included representatives from 24 UNDP offices in the region, the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Regional Centre, as well as from partner organizations dealing with issues of disarmament, security and development. The overall objectives of the workshop included promoting dialogue on the above-mentioned report (A/59/119) and reviewing the implications for work in the region; forming synergies between UNDP and other departments and agencies dealing with disarmament and development issues as the most appropriate means of strengthening that link; and designing and managing programmes for the creation of governance and security conditions favourable to development, such as small arms and light weapons control, security sector reform and transparency and accountability of military expenditures.

12. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs Task Force on Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Development organized an expert group meeting with participation from a cross-section of academics, practitioners, departments and other stakeholders on 15 November 2004 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The objective of the meeting was to reflect upon building and integrating the Department's own framework into the broader United Nations framework for integrating peace with development. Experts at the meeting identified the following

six main challenges in determining approaches to integrating conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development:

- Firstly, the interrelationships between underdevelopment and the eruption of violent conflicts were fairly complex and therefore required multidimensional analysis and approaches.

- Secondly, in order to address the growing trend in the business sector to become involved in conflict issues, it was necessary to embrace the concept of involving all actors in their efforts to prevent conflicts.

- In the third place, there is a widely recognized need to develop subregional, regional and global approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In that context, a global policy framework for development is needed to integrate conflict-prone countries as well as countries emerging from conflict into the global economy.

- Another challenge is that the underlying systemic causes of conflict should be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

- It is also necessary to translate into operational practices the considerable amount of work done on the conceptual side of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

- Finally, it is necessary to pursue integration and coordination within the United Nations system and with outside actors through effective and efficient means rather than through rigid structures.

The outcome of the expert group meeting has served to guide the Department in the task of integrating conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development.

13. In addition to the expert group meeting, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continues to engage in a range of technical cooperation activities that address conflict, development and disarmament issues. The Department, in partnership with the University of Ghana and the Training Programme for International Conflict Management of the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa, Italy, has established the Training Programme on Peacebuilding and Good Governance for African civilian personnel in Accra to create a cadre of well-trained, professional and skilled African civilian personnel for peace support operations. To date, the project has trained over 200 African civilians from 29 African countries in various subjects including basic courses in peace operations; train-the-trainer workshops; and specialized courses for corrections officers, in election observation and on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

14. The Conflict Management Capacity-Building Project of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been operational in sub-Saharan Africa for four years, seeking to strengthen the ability of African institutions to anticipate, analyse and respond effectively in conflict environments. This regional project offers the following: (a) training in conflict analysis, mediation, negotiation and conflict-sensitive development to government and civil society officials; (b) policy advice and technical assistance to strengthen the capacities of governance institutions in managing conflict; and (c) the Peacebuilding Portal, an online, interactive database and networking tool working to strengthen the conflict prevention and peacebuilding community in non-governmental organizations and civil society in sub-Saharan Africa.

15. In collaboration with African conflict transformation practitioners, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs developed thematic training workshops on conflict analysis and early response, conflict sensitive development, mediation and negotiation skills, and conflict management systems design. The training material is being provided to universities, management institutes and NGOs in sub-Saharan Africa for adaptation and absorption into their regular curricula. Over the past year, train-the-trainer workshops were conducted for 25 faculty members from 15 institutions across the continent and the training workshops are now being replicated in Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

16. The Peacebuilding Portal, an online database of over 2,000 conflict-related organizations, strengthens networking and information-sharing among peacebuilding organizations. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is now formally working with the African Union to jointly launch and expand the Portal to francophone countries. The Department is also engaging with the Organization of American States and other regional organizations to expand the Portal to serve Central and Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and other regions. In collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Portal has become a valuable gateway for information on disarmament in conflict management and peacebuilding, in that disarmament is one of the 10 thematic areas of the Portal. The Portal also offers profiles of 80 disarmament-related NGOs in Africa.

17. At its seventh session, from 14 to 18 March 2005, the Committee for Development Policy addressed the theme of reconstruction, development and sustainable peace in post-conflict countries. Its report (E/2005/33) showed that links between poverty and conflict are highly complex and multidimensional. Many conflicts erupt in poor countries with low levels of human capital. With regard to post-conflict reconstruction, the Committee stressed that special attention had to be paid to the reintegration into society of people involved in violence. To that end, mass media should be legally prohibited from promoting mistrust and hatred. Other specific proposals of the Committee were that a monitoring unit should be established within the United Nations to identify those countries most at risk of conflict, and that a United Nations post-conflict reconstruction facility should be created to serve as a prompt response instrument for donor coordination.

18. The United Nations Development Programme continues to be engaged in specific activities to promote the linkages between disarmament and development. Its core areas of work address many of the key issues highlighted by the Group of Governmental Experts, as outlined below.

- **Small arms and light weapons control**. Since 1998, UNDP has contributed to addressing the dangers associated with the proliferation of small arms and light weapons by designing projects to respond to the problem from a development perspective. The conceptual underpinning of the initiatives arises from the fact that in post-conflict situations weapons are still in the hands of individuals and groups who are challenged by the lack of public security, employment and opportunities for economic livelihoods. Through the "weapons for development" approach, UNDP has promoted development activities in exchange for weapons voluntarily surrendered by communities. UNDP has also supported national initiatives to increase awareness on micro-

disarmament and its impact on development; influenced legislation reforms on possession and use of firearms; and provided a framework for national Governments to respond to the dangers of proliferation of small arms. Since 2003, UNDP has actively supported small arms control and reduction programmes in Kosovo and in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ghana, Honduras, Kenya, Niger, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands and Somalia. UNDP has also supported regional projects on small arms control in the Balkans, Central America and the Great Lakes region of Africa.

- **Armed violence reduction and prevention**. In recent years, UNDP has broadened its work to encompass armed violence reduction and prevention issues, reflecting the emerging view that small arms control (and disarmament) is one component within a comprehensive approach to reducing and preventing armed violence and improving human security. The United Nations Development Programme's support for armed violence reduction has focused on both long-term and short-term measures as part of a broader public security approach. Key elements of the UNDP strategy, drawing on its rich programming base, include (a) strengthening integration of armed violence prevention and reduction strategies in national plans and policies for security sector reform, and (b) the establishment of linkages with other sectors, such as education, culture, sports and employment creation. Through assistance of this nature, UNDP helps bridge the gap between advocates of "hard" law enforcement approaches to public security and those actors primarily concerned with the social and developmental aspects of crime and violence. UNDP has provided support for the preceding approach to armed violence reduction in a number of countries, including Colombia, El Salvador, Haiti and Papua New Guinea.

- **Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration**. Since the early 1990s UNDP has supported the management and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in both peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping contexts. As a development organization that is often given the responsibility to implement or manage the longer-term aspects of reintegration of ex-combatants, the key objective of UNDP is to support sustainable disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants within broader recovery processes to reinforce national peacebuilding and reconciliation, address security-related issues and provide alternative livelihoods for this high-risk group. In peacekeeping contexts such as Haiti and the Sudan, UNDP collaborates closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Children's Fund and other United Nations agencies, funds, departments and programmes in the development of a common United Nations approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration within "integrated" peace support operations. Such collaboration strengthens the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration capacities and expertise of peacekeeping operations; provides greater strategic and programmatic depth; improves management of financial and United Nations system inputs; and provides a seamless interface between the security and military functions of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as broader transition and reconstruction processes. The participation of UNDP also ensures an efficient exit strategy from and follow-

up to the mission. In non-peacekeeping contexts, UNDP takes on a larger share of the programmatic, coordination and operational functions in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration owing to the absence of a mission. UNDP has provided support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in United Nations peacekeeping contexts in Afghanistan, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Haiti, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and the Sudan. UNDP support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in United Nations non-peacekeeping contexts includes the Central African Republic, the Comoros, the Congo, the Niger, Somalia and the Solomon Islands.

Notes

[1] See *International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, New York, 24 August-11 September 1987* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.IX.8).

[2] The expert panel comprised Lawrence Klein, Nobel laureate in economics, who is associated with Economists Allied for Arms Reduction; Sir Richard Jolly, former principal coordinator of the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report; and Sarah Meek, head of the Arms Management Programme at the Institute for Security Studies, South Africa.

[3] For the presentations by the independent experts, see "Symposium on the relationship between disarmament and development", Occasional Paper Series No. 9 (Department for Disarmament Affairs, November 2004).

[4] In addition to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, participants included the Department for Disarmament Affairs, Department of Political Affairs, Department of Public Information, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Population Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, World Food Programme and World Health Organization.